



Western South Dakota Outdoor Report

Wildlife Division Region 1
October 24, 2014



DATE: 10/22/2014

North District (Lawrence, Butte, Harding, Perkins, Meade & Ziebach)

Reporting Officer: DCOS Apland, WCO's Eastman, Mutschler, Fees & Hein

Fishing Report:

Lawrence County –Fishing activity has slowed down, but the fishing success is good, most Hills lakes getting the large fall stockings before ice.

Butte County – Anglers fishing Orman have not been catching limits but are have some luck catching their walleye over 18” throughout Orman. Walleye under 15” have been harder to come by at this time. Anglers fishing Orman/Belle Fourche Reservoir please remember that there is a slot and only one Walleye over 18” may be kept per person. Also, Walleye between 15” to 18” cannot be kept. Small mouth bass and perch are regularly being caught. Boaters please remember to properly drain the boat before leaving the launch areas. Help us keep the aquatic nuisance out of our lakes!

Perkins County – Fisherman have been catching walleye and crappies at Shadehill. Most of these anglers are not catching limits but the fish they do catch are fat and healthy.

Meade County – Activity has been slow throughout Meade County with minimal fishing activity for both Meade and Ziebach Counties.

Access to Howes corner lakes is now open now that Hwy 34 construction is opened to traffic again.

Ziebach – Anglers reports have been limited in recent weeks.



Western Prairie Lake and dams:

Fishing has been slow.

Please read the Western Lakes Regulations when fishing due to the changes of limits and sizes of fish in each lake.

Wildlife:

The resident pheasant opener was this past weekend and numerous hunters were checked in the eastern portion of the central district. Hunters were discouraged due to the amount of unharvested crops in the field. Those hunters that had limits worked hard to get them!

Duck season (High Planes) opened this past weekend and hunters seemed to do better on Sunday as the weather cooled. Lots of teal were found in daily limits. Remember, hunters are allowed two bonus blue-winged teal for the first 16 days of the season (Oct 11th-26th).

This upcoming weekend will be the end of the rifle antelope season (closing on Oct. 19th). Antelope numbers seem to be on the rise with the reduction of licenses, and hunters appeared to be successful during this year's season. An unfortunate violation found every year (including this year) is the pursuit of antelope by vehicles. This is obviously not fair chase and anyone witnessing such violation is encouraged to call the TIPs hotline: 1-888-OVERBAG.

The antlerless elk season opens on Oct. 16th. It's a great time of year to be out in the woods amongst elk. Elk are extremely vocal right now.

Please remember to get the 2014 Hunting Handbook and read up on new changes for this year. Also, the 2014 Hunting Atlas is out. Please review due to changes in WIA land this year in certain locations.

Fall survey is still in progress. As of now the department is surveying deer. The State of South Dakota Pheasant survey has been completed and you can find the results on the GFP website.

Hunting Report:

Archery deer season is open and although deer numbers are down throughout most of western SD hunters can still have a quality archery hunting experience. We are seeing that the recent high temperatures have limited deer movement and success has been slow. Remember to respect the land, landowners, and wildlife by following rules and taking good ethical shots.

Rifle Antelope season is closed. The season offered good opportunity and nice weather.

Prairie unit 9 and 15 Elk hunters are reminded they are required to acquire permission from landowners prior to the hunt, as these are private land hunts only.

Pheasant season is open and hunters have been reporting a much better hunt this year than last. Perkins County has a lot of cover and much of the crops are still in. This has made the bird hunting somewhat of a challenge. Most of the pheasants are spread out within all the crops.

Duck season also opens October 11th for the High Plains region. The resident duck numbers are good and can be found on many ponds throughout northwest SD. It would be a good idea to go hunting ducks with a seasoned duck hunter that can help in duck identification. The daily duck limit is such that positive identification is very important before the shot is taken.

Meade County – Activity has been slow throughout Meade County. Fishing should pick up as the temperatures reduce. Durkee Lake is still a good place to take youngsters as bluegill and bullheads anxiously wait below the dock.

Access to Howes corner lakes is now open now that Hwy 34 construction is opened to traffic again.

Ziebach – Anglers reports have been limited in recent weeks. It's always important to pay special attention to deeded land vs. tribal land in relation to having the correct license. Glad Valley dam has been quite productive resulting in quality bass and perch.

DATE: 09/016/2014

Things to Remember:

- With the hunting season upon us, hunters please be cognizant of the fire dangers. Pay close attention to vehicle travel, cigarette butts, camp fires, and all other potential fire starters. It is always a good idea to take along a fire extinguisher just in case!
- Backcountry roads when wet are a mess. Please avoid tearing up roads and private driveways when possible.

- Hunters please remember baiting wildlife for the purpose of hunting is illegal. Step up to the challenge, don't bait.
- Dove hunters are required to harvest doves in flight and 50yrd from the road.
- Archery hunters should review recent regulation updates before entering the field.

Please remember to get the 2014 Hunting Handbook and read up on new changes for this year. Also, the 2014 Hunting Atlas is out. Please review due to changes in WIA land this year in certain locations.

Fall survey is still in progress. As of now the department is surveying antelope, turkey and deer in the Black hills. The State of South Dakota Pheasant survey has been completed and you can find the results on the GFP website.

PLEASE REMEMBER WITH DRIER WEATHER/GRASS BRINGS HIGHER FIRE DANGER. PEOPLE RESPECTFUL ON PUBLIC AREAS WITH THE FALL HUNTING SEASON APPROACHING.

DATE: 10/22/2014

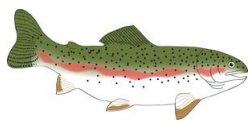
Central District

(SE Lawrence, S Meade, C Pennington, E Pennington, Haakon, N Jackson, NE Custer)

**Reporting Officer: WCO's Brainard, Edwards, Geigle, Keeton, Thomsen
DCOS McCormick**

Fishing Activity: Western South Dakota

Black Hills area lakes and streams:



Fishing activity has slowed considerably, however those anglers on the lake are successful. Fish are mainly being caught on worms and some anglers catching on salmon eggs. Anglers are having success with northern pike on Pactola Lake.

Western Prairie Lake and dams:



Fishing has been slow.

Please read the Western Lakes Regulations when fishing due to the changes of limits and sizes of fish in each lake.

Wildlife:

Pheasant season opened this past weekend and hunters were anxious to get out with family and friends to shoot some birds. If you were disappointed, remember that the pheasant season only gets better as crops are harvested and temperatures cool.

Duck season (High Planes) is currently open. Lots of teal were found in daily limits. Remember, hunters are allowed two bonus blue-winged teal for the first 16 days of the season (Oct 11th-26th).

The antlerless elk season opened on Oct. 16th. It's a great time of year to be out in the woods amongst elk. Elk are extremely vocal right now.

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Region 1 Wildlife Report

District Report-

Big Game – I have found one more whitetail deer (a buck) which likely died of EHD. If you find any safety course planned for the nights of September 24 – 26 in Martin. Please contact Gary Rayhill or Tom Beck for more information.

Date: 10/23/2014

County: **Bennett/East Shannon/South Jackson**

Reporting Officer: WCO Tom Beck

Fishing Activity:

Nothing new to report.



Hunting Report:

Waterfowl – The opener of the Bennett County Special Goose season was pretty slow. While there are a few geese around, it is pretty hit and miss on

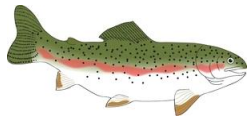
harvesting them. Likewise duck season is pretty slow as warm weather has kept any from moving in from the north.

Small Game – Weather again played a big part in the pheasant opener. Saturday was fairly warm, but windy and the birds held well for hunters. The average was around 1 ½ birds per hunter per day. Sunday was very warm and calm. The birds ran and were tough to get within range of. Success dropped to less than half a bird per hunter for the day. The hot weather was tough on both hunters and dogs. Please make sure your dog has lots of water and does not overheat out there. Another problem for dogs has been rattlesnakes. One dog was killed by a snake on the refuge on Saturday. Several other snakes were killed in various locations after close calls with hunters. The snakes are not just by prairie dog towns but seem to be quite a ways from den locations. Please be on alert if hunting during this warm spell. Hunter numbers were fairly high on Saturday, but by Monday the numbers of hunters have dropped considerably.

Big Game – Several elk were killed last week. It is still tough hunting as most crops are still standing in the fields, but at least a few elk were in the area. The refuge deer hunt has been tough also. With all of the standing crops outside of the refuge and the die off of the last couple of years, deer numbers inside the refuge are low and hunters are having some issues finding deer to shoot. I don't look for any change until crops are harvested this fall.
Date: 10/23/2014

County: **West Custer/West Pennington**
Reporting Officer: WCO Jacob Ehlert

Fishing: No report



Big Game: Archery deer hunters have been shooting some nice bucks this year. With how dry it's been patterning water sources has been effective. Vegetation has created some great antler growth and there are some outstanding deer available to a person who puts their time in.

Elk hunters have been having some great success. Rifle hunters willing to hike are killing some great bulls. Cow hunters are having good success also.

Unit 3 cow hunters need to remember the unit is closed north of 18 Mile/Pleasant Valley Rd, so the north part of Pleasant Valley GPA is closed for cow hunting.

District Report: If you are going camping in the Black Hills Fire Protection District remember no open fires outside of designated campgrounds.

If you witness a violation please call TIPS at 1-888-OVERBAG or your local Sheriff's Office. Making the call can prevent poachers from stealing YOUR public resource!



District Report: If you are going camping in the Black Hills Fire Protection District remember no open fires outside of designated campgrounds. This has been an issue lately.

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Date: 10/23/2014

County: **East Custer/South Pennington**

Reporting Officer: WCO Ron Tietsort

Fishing Activity: Lakota, Bismarck and Horse thief lakes are all in the process of being drained for the Fall and Winter, some fish have been removed and transferred to other waters, you can still fish and take your daily limit by legal methods at this time

Big Game: The elk season is progressing well with many hunters having success, both cow and any elk hunters are in the field until the end of the month.

Archery deer season is in full swing as well, there was one hunting accident in the area and the hunter asked me to warn all archers to be careful while stalking their game, "make sure to have your arrow off the string when you have completed your stalk" was the words he asked me to pass on, when the hunter finished his stalk and started to return to his vehicle, he tripped on some down timber and fell on his arrow which just barely missed a major artery.

Small Game: Not much to report, some sharp-tail grouse hunting is available in the eastern portion of the district.

e decent opportunity to catch some trout. Angostura remains a little slower - but some nice fish are being harvested daily.

Hunting Report:



There are several archery antelope hunters in the area. Success is limited - but hunters are finding a few antelope to chase around. Seeing a few successful elk hunters this last week. The cold snap sure help "wake the bulls up". Should be an excellent hunt this fall. Youth hunters are beginning to take interest in the deer hunting also. There are still doves in the area - - but the cool weather has sent a lot of them south. Not seeing a lot of pheasants out there yet. Hard to tell with all the cover - but it looks like it may take a few more years to re-build that

population.

District Report:

This is that time of year when we really need assistance from sportsmen to contact us when you see something that doesn't look right in terms of illegal activity out there.

Please take the time to record a license number and vehicle description when you witness a fish or game violation. Don't hesitate to call the TIP's Hotline or the local Sheriff's Office and report the violators. You will help us all preserve the sport!!

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Date: 10/23/2014

County: Fall River

Reporting Officer: WCO DJ Schroeder

Fishing Activity:



The warm weather has encouraged many to continue fishing well into October this year. We did see fish being caught at Angostura and Coldbrook again this week.

Hunting Report:



Small Game: The pheasant hunting has been about as expected the last couple of weeks. The regular season opened this past weekend. We saw a lot of pre There were approximately 25 –30 vehicles at the Hill Game Production area on opening day. We saw several hunters at the GPAs at Oral also. Most hunters reported have some success. It varied from several having limits to several who had harvested just one bird. There were also several duck hunters out and about this past weekend. here are several archery antelope hunters in the area. Success is limited - but hunters are finding a few antelope to chase around. Seeing a few successful elk hunters this last week. The cold snap sure help “wake the bulls up”. Should be an excellent hunt this fall. Youth hunters are beginning to take interest in the deer hunting also. There are still doves in the area - - but the cool weather has sent a lot of them south. Not seeing a lot of pheasants out there yet. Hard to tell with all the cover – but it looks like it may take a few more years to re-build that population.

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ESTIMATED WATERFOWL STATUS/OPPORTUNITY FOR FALL RIVER COUNTY AND WESTERN SHANNON COUNTY:

County	FALL RIVER		
	Canadas	Ducks	Snows
NE	2	2	0
NW	1	2	0
SE	2	2	0
SW	1	2	0

County	WESTERN SHANNON		
	Canadas	Ducks	Snows
NE			
NW	1	2	0
SE			
SW	1	2	0

Big Game: Elk season continues to produce successful hunters. We saw several cows harvested this past week. There were several bulls harvested as well. The warm weather has made it less desirable to be out hunting - - but many hunters are dealing with it and finding success.

Rifle antelope season finished this past weekend. Overall success was pretty good again this year. The weather was exceptional this year and made for an excellent opening weekend. There were several 12-13 inch bucks harvested in Fall River County. The antelope seemed to be spread out over a lot of the county. There were some “hot spots” that really produced again this year.

Land Report:

Hunters are reminded to watch for the “off-road” travel restrictions while hunting on the State Game Production Areas, Walk-In Areas, and US Forest Service Black Hills and Grasslands properties. Hunters should also remember to be extremely careful with fire dangers this fall.